tolerate independent religious bodies that challenged government control of all aspects of public and private life. 771

Religions in the twentieth century were caught in this crossfire of negative sentiment and attack. To modernize and to become militant was to provoke state suppression, and the effort of religious leaders to stem the rising tide of intellectual materialism failed.[3] In the countryside the old folk religions -- varieties of Buddhism and Taoism -- continued to wither away. Christianity made some advances, but it was always tainted by its foreignness, by the fact that its missionaries came with the backing of the Western powers which held China in thrall.

Communist policy towards religion is in many ways the culmination of the trends we have described. It reflects the triumph of materialist philosophy and the imposition of materialism as the intellectual orthodoxy. It is highly nationalistic and anti-foreign and thus insists that all religious organizations cease receiving support from abroad and assert their distinctive Chinese character. It carries forward, through the most effective apparatus of control and coercion that China has seen, the confiscation of church property and the secularization of the clergy. The Communist Constitution provides that "Citizens of the People's Republic of China have freedom of religious belief."[4] This means, in practice, that 798

3. O. Brière, op. cit., passim.
4. Article 88, Ch. III.

1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF14 Central China AF14

people of various religious persuasions are allowed a limited and shrinking area of belief and action by an authoritarian government, which reserves the fundamental right to control all education, communication, and public and private morality. On the grounds of anti-superstition, anti-imperialism, and anti-feudalism, the government and Party move steadily, with only occasional tactical retreats, towards the liquidation of religion in China. 798

Both pre-Communist trends and Communist policies should be kept in mind as we consider religion in the Central-South Region.

II. BUDDHISM

This oldest of imported religions shows, in its recent development, some of the trends just noted. Despite the efforts of the noted abbot Tai-hsü (1889-1946), Buddhism never competed successfully for the allegiance of the intellectuals. The effort to transform it into a modern religion, by updating both its theology and its social program, failed, although for a time it seemed to show signs of an increasing vitality. Under warlord and nationalist governments its personnel and establishments suffered severe attrition. Its establishments were taxed, its temples were converted to secular use by warlords, Kuomintang officials, and the local gentry. Much Buddhist property was confiscated, and tenants on Buddhist land refused to pay their rent. Monks and nuns were driven from their temples in cities where up to 80 779 798

1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF14 Central China AF14

per cent of Buddhist establishments were secularized.[5] 779 798

The Japanese attempt to use Buddhism as an ideology to bind together their puppet regimes in China and Southeast Asia probably generated widespread anti-Buddhism sentiment throughout Free and Occupied China.

The older clergy of monks and nuns was accused of being corrupt and parasitic by modern Buddhists, but efforts at sweeping fundamental reform failed; the motivation for becoming a member of such a clergy remained largely negative.[6] Thus gradual 779

---

5. Cf. Wing-tsit Chan, Religious Trends in Modern China, New York, 1953, pp. 55-56. This summary is from Ta-hsing, "Fifteen Years of Religious Catastrophes in Retrospect," Hai-ch'ao-yin [The Sound of the Sea Tide], a magazine, Vol. XVI, No. 1, Jan. 1935.

6. Chan, Religious Trends, pp. 81-82, citing Reichelt, Truth and Tradition in Chinese Buddhism, pp. 231-34, lists reasons given by Chinese nuns for entering holy orders. Unhappy marriages account for a great number, and 60 to 70 per cent made the choice because no other solution presented itself. Other reasons for entering holy orders include: genuine and deep faith; presented to the church by parents because of devotion, sickness, lack of support, or an astrologer's advice; sense of helplessness after husband's death; poverty, family troubles or other disappointments; influence of sisters, et al, who had become nuns; and servants seeking escape from the cruelty of their mistresses.

1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF14 Central China AF14

779
797

trouble to the Church. The exchange of envoys between the Vatican and the Nationalist government took place in 1946; Bishop Paul Yü-pin was widely believed to have strong influence with Generalissimo Chiang; these and other signs of identification of the Catholic Church with the Nationalist Government boded ill for the Church when the government declined in power. As the Communist power increased, the persecution of the Church, begun in Communist areas in 1937, was a grim warning of what might be in store for Chinese Catholicism as a whole.[49] Catholic Action, the association of enthusiastic laymen for the advancement of the Faith, had been growing in all parts of the country from 1928 onward; there were two-hundred groups and thirty youth groups as early as 1930.[50] In 1948 the Papal Nuncio ordered the formation of the Legion of Mary, a more militant, zealous, and disciplined organization of Catholic laymen, which in many areas absorbed the Catholic Action groups. The new organization was set up by an American priest, and it had the Chinese name of Sheng-mu chün (Army, or Legion, of Mary). Many experienced Catholic missionaries were doubtful if any strong Chinese government would tolerate this type of militant organization. The group has proved of major propaganda value to the Communists and an object

798

49. Cf. Raymonde de Jaegher and I. Corbally Kuhn, Tempete sur la Chine, Paris, 1953.
50. Monsterleet, p. 148.

1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF14 Central China AF14

of their most ruthless measures of oppression.[51]

Communist policies and propaganda have made the most of all the vulnerabilities of the Chinese Catholic Church. Its foreign "imperialist" and Kuomintang connections were played up, and nationalistic feelings against it were aroused. Its role as property owner -- "foreign capitalist-imperialist oppression" -- was dramatized during the land reform period, and local ignorance and hatred turned against it.[52] Old and long-discredited accusations were made against Catholic charitable organizations: the Sacred Heart Home for Children in Nanking was labeled a "little Buchenwald" and the sisters were accused of torturing, neglecting, and selling Chinese children.[53] The war in Korea provided the occasion for an increasing number of accusations of espionage against Catholic clergy.

Communist government measures have been many, but the main steps resemble those taken

---

51. Cf. Hsü, Hsin Chung-kuo ti tsung-chiao kohsin yün-tung, [The Movement for Religious Reformation in New China], Shanghai, 1951, pp. 9-13.

52. Cf. the dramatic eyewitness account of F. Legrand, Le Communisme arrive au village Chinois, Peking, 1947. This observation was made before the nation-wide land reform campaign.

53. Cf. Walker, China Under Communism, p. 190. Such accusations recall the stories circulated by the gentry which touched off the Tientsin massacre of Chinese Catholics and foreigners in 1870.

1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF14 Central China AF14

against other religious groups. The 1950 campaign for "triple independence" or "triple autonomy" involved freedom from foreign administration, financing, and evangelistic policy control. This was given emotional significance by the warfare in Korea, with the Communists' well-managed propaganda campaigns against imperialism and espionage.[54]

In 1951 the campaign against the Church was accelerated. All Catholic schools and universities and many hospitals and churches were confiscated. Priests were "tried" and imprisoned, and the Papal Nuncio was expelled from China.[55]

The next step in the campaign against Catholicism resembled the policy followed in Russia and in the East European satellites. This was the foundation by the Communists of a "national church" whose guiding spirits were a small minority of disaffected clergy and laymen. This group was constituted as the "Committee of the Reform Church." It was not subject to episcopal or pontifical directives. The group was to decide what was to be taught, who could say mass or give the sacraments; and it advocated "progressive," i.e. orthodox Communist teaching. Under its sponsorship certain "model parishes" were set up with "progressive" priests in charge. Apparently this organization has had only limited success. Monsterleet estimates that only 2 per cent of the native clergy went over to the

54. Monsterleet, pp. 25-29.
55. Ibid., p. 28.

1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF14 Central China AF14

798

"reform church" in 1953. More than 20 per cent openly proclaimed their faith and/or died as martyrs.[56]

Since October 1952, there has been less persecution of Catholics, although between January 1951 and November 1953 the number of missionaries[57] was reduced through expulsion from 3,222 to 364. In December 1955 it was reported by British subjects leaving Shanghai that regular Catholic services were being held and were well attended.[58]

797

The Central-South Region has fewer and less important centers of Catholicism than North China.[59] The distribution of these centers in this region in 1946 was as follows:

---

56. Monsterleet, p. 29. It should be emphasized that these figures are given by a Catholic author.

57. Mission Bulletin, April 1952, p. 323, and January 1954, p. 56; cited in Walker, op. cit., p. 189.

58. New York Times, Dec. 18, 1955.

59. Monsterleet, pp. 16-17.

1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF14 Central China AF14

We are fortunate in having reports on Kwangsi Province which give full details of the tactics of the Communists at the local level.[60] In Nanning, a provincial capital of 180,000, there was a Catholic community of four-hundred. The bishop was a foreigner, and the community had a seminary with five Chinese priest-professors and twenty students, a convent with forty nuns or novices, a Catholic school with one hundred students, and a much-frequented dispensary. The Communists turned against this small community all their battery of weapons. In September 1950, the papers began talking of the "reform" of the "Protestant patriots" who had broken with imperialism. Pressure on the Catholics mounted to follow this example. Towards the end of the year "registration" of mission property and investigations were carried out. At the New Year, two cadres whose mission was to promote the "reform" movement urged leading Catholics to join the movement in order to show their patriotism. Threats accompanied the persuasion. The Catholics, warned that the "reform" movement was against the laws of the Church, stood firm.

Early in 1951, the Protestants of Nanning signed a manifesto of "reform," and pressure increased for the Catholics to do the same. The Chinese pastor of a district near Nanning, who had refused to head a "reformed" church of Nanning, was accused of being an agent of the imperialists

60. Monsterleet, pp. 86-95; Robert W. Greene, Calvary in China, New York, 1953, passim.

1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF14 Central China AF14

and sentenced to ten years' hard-labor. Certain Catholic intellectuals sought to make a patriotic statement without associating themselves with the "reform" movement. When told that they must show their patriotism by joining the movement and denouncing the Pope as the leading imperialist, they refused. Then, characteristically, the Communists attacked vulnerable Catholic individuals, particularly a certain Mr. Ma who had worked with Americans in UNRRA. He might have succumbed to Communist persuasion if the local bishop, Monsignor Albany, had not warned him that excommunication would follow; instead he escaped from the city. In the next several months, the local Catholics defied public accusations. Arrests, torture, and execution of Chinese clergy added to the tension. In September 1952, the bishop was subjected to public trial and sentenced to expulsion from China. In spite of Communist attack, the Catholics of Nanning lost very few members to the "reform movement," and it seemed as if they had won a temporary victory.[61] Yet the Communist apparatus of education and propaganda continued its relentless work, and the Communist ideology seemed to appeal to young people. Father Greene, who witnessed the persecution in Kwangsi, sounds a sombre note of warning in his book, Calvary in China.[62] He is speaking of the cadres:

> "It was impossible for me, as I watched these well-trained youths perform their

61. Summarized from Monsterleet, pp. 86-95.
62. Greene, op. cit., pp. 76-77.

1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF14 Central China AF14

inhuman tasks, to minimize the seriousness of their convictions and the thoroughness of their methods. These convictions were deeply impressed on their minds....The new ideas and strange throughts are unconditionally accepted by the young, and accepted with a fanaticism which fears neither suffering, hardship nor death. I saw shy youths changed into courageous apostles; I saw the ambitious and selfish give up their goals and possessions; I saw some of my Christian youths break the bonds of family and friendship for this Cause."

798

The basic question is whether the harassed and persecuted Church can find the means to give its own youth these qualities. If it can not, its future throughout China is dark indeed.

VI. PROTESTANTISM

797

In many respects the Protestant missionaries and their converts set the pattern for the modernizing movements which took place in Buddhism and Islam. Protestant religious work in the twentieth century came to be accompanied by widespread, diverse, and large-scale social service, medical, and educational activities. The Protestant missionaries helped to awaken the social conscience of the Chinese, and the missions were major centers for the dissemination of general knowledge about the West. Sun Yat-sen was a devout Christian, and Christian thought left its mark on much of his work. As

1:Stanford U. S-4, 5 1956 AF14 Central China AF14

797

The Sino-Japanese War and the war in the Pacific disrupted missionary efforts in north and central China, and in the years 1945-49 Protestant churches were gradually rehabilitating their establishments throughout the country. But there were serious difficulties in these years. American support, which had long been the principal source of funds for Chinese Protestantism, became increasingly suspect as Communist and left wing propaganda harped on "American imperialism" and as Chiang's government, which also received American support, became increasingly discredited. Protestants, because of their overwhelming emphasis on the socia' gospel (serving God through service to society) and their less formidable unity and discipline, suffered less in Communist-occupied areas than did the Catholics.

798 ●

The timetable of Communist moves against Protestants and their organizations follows approximately that for the Catholics noted above. The "national church," the "three autonomies," the confiscation of church property, church schools, and hospitals were accompanied by a steady expulsion of the missionaries. The following figures show the decrease in Protestant missionary personnel between 1935 and 1949 and the almost total elimination of missionaries since that time.[67] In 1935, there were 5,816 Protestant missionaries in China; in 1949, about 3,000; in April 1952, only 100.

---

67. The first figure is from the Handbook of the Christian Movement, reproduced in Damboriena, p. 82. The other figures are from Walker, op. cit., p. 19.

2:Shryock H-4, 5 (no date)1931 AF14 Central China AF14

794 them with punishment? If punishments are more effective than moral teaching, we govern contrary to the example of the ancient rulers."

„ So I wrote the essay."

DECREES OF THE BOARD OF RITES.

794 Translated by Parker *(ibid.)*, from the Tung Hua Lu (Decrees of the
798 Manchu Dynasty).

"The 6th month, 1744. The Board of Rites presents a report to the effect that the Literary Chancellor for Honan province has represented the existence of over 590 chapels in that region of a so called Triple Religion, in which the teacher of everlasting memory occupies a position inferior to that given to Buddha and Laotzi, an unorthodox arrangement calculated grieviously to mislead the people, who vie with each other in squandering their substance for no other end than the destruction of proper doctrine; the chancellor recommends that the governor of that province be commanded strictly to prohibit such doings; and the board not only approves this recommendation, but advises that steps be taken to introduce the sacred effigy into all libraries and schools throughout the province; those of Buddha and Laotzi, on the other hand, being removed to separate temples, along with the priests attached to Buddhism and Taoism, who must only reside there; and moreover, that other provinces be notified to issue like prohibitions. His Majesty agrees to this."

"The 7th month, being the new moon. Wang Chen Ki represents that in the Shou Yang Hsien city, and in other cities of Shansi, there are temples of the Triple Religion, and that the most sacred Sage of the past, Confucius, is to be found in one and the same temple receiving the same worship as Buddha and Laotzi, a state of affairs contrary to the canons of worship. Let Shen K'i Hien issue circular instructions to all jurisdictions under his rule to have an immediate change made, and if any other provinces have similar joint temples with common worship, let all viceroys and gover-

2:Shryock H-4, 5 (no date)1931 AF14 Central China AF14

nors concerned take identical steps to bring about a change for the better, in order to exalt the orthodox teaching."

794
798

The San Shen An no longer exists as a temple, but the cult can not have been entirely suppressed, for I found the three altars in the chapel of a charitable organization outside the West Gate of Anking.

Here I may close this brief survey of the temples and cults of Anking.